<center>REMARKS</center>

Please cancel Claims 6, 14 and 22 without prejudice. Claims 1-5, 7-13, 15-21 and 23-30 are pending. Claims 1, 7, 9, 15, 17, 23, 25 and 29 are amended herein. No new matter is added as a result of the claim amendments.

<center>102 Rejections</center>

The instant Office Action states that Claims 1, 4-5, 7-9, 12-13, 15-17, 20-21, 23-25 and 27-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Angiulo et al. ("Angiulo;" U.S. Patent No. 6,456,304).

Independent Claim 1 recites that an embodiment of the present invention is directed to a method of helping a user perform tasks in software, where the method includes "rendering a plurality of graphic elements, wherein said graphic elements are visibly displayed regardless of which of said tasks is being performed and regardless of whether said graphic elements are active or inactive ...; and activating a first portion of said graphic elements and deactivating a second portion of said graphic elements in response to user selection of said element with said element active." Claims 4-5 and 7-8 are dependent on Claim 1 and recite additional limitations.

Independent Claim 9 recites that an embodiment of the present invention is directed to a computer system that implements a method of helping a user perform tasks in software, where the method includes "rendering a plurality of graphic elements ..., wherein said graphic

elements are visibly displayed regardless of which of said tasks is being performed and regardless of whether said graphic elements are active or inactive ...; and activating a first portion of said graphic elements and deactivating a second portion of said graphic elements in response to user selection of said element with said element active." Claims 12-13 and 15-16 are dependent on Claim 9 and recite additional limitations.

Independent Claim 17 recites that an embodiment of the present invention is directed to a computer-usable medium that causes a computer system to perform a method of helping a user perform tasks in software, where the method includes "rendering a plurality of graphic elements, wherein said graphic elements are visibly displayed regardless of which of said tasks is being performed and regardless of whether said graphic elements are active or inactive ...; and activating a first portion of said graphic elements and deactivating a second portion of said graphic elements in response to user selection of said element with said element active." Claims 20-21 and 23-24 are dependent on Claim 17 and recite additional limitations.

Independent Claim 25 recites that an embodiment of the present invention is directed to a graphical user interface (GUI) for helping a user perform tasks in software, where the GUI includes "a plurality of graphic elements, wherein said graphic elements are visibly displayed regardless of which of said tasks is being performed and regardless of whether said graphic elements are active or inactive ...; and wherein a first portion of said graphic elements are activated and a second portion of said graphic

elements are deactivated in response to user selection of said element with said element active." Claims 27-30 are dependent on Claim 25 and recite additional limitations.

Applicants respectfully submit that Angiulo does not show or suggest the present claimed invention as recited in independent Claims 1, 9, 17 and 25. Specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that Angiulo does not show or suggest that certain graphic elements are activated and others deactivated in response to a user selecting an active element, where the elements are visibly displayed regardless of the task being performed and regardless of whether the elements are active or not.

Applicants understand Angiulo only to teach that selection of an item in a dropdown menu can activate or deactivate another element. As discussed below, Applicants respectfully assert that neither the dropdown menus nor the items in the dropdown menus of Angiulo read on the graphic elements of Claims 1, 9, 17 and 25.

According to the claims, graphics elements are visibly displayed regardless of the task being performed and whether or not the elements are active. According to Angiulo, and in contrast to the present claimed invention, the drop down menus and the items therein are not visibly displayed regardless of the task being performed and regardless of whether or not they are active.

According to Angiulo, the items in a dropdown menu are displayed when a user clicks on a "selection control" (e.g., event selection control 106, effect selection control 108, or effect settings selection control 110 of Angiulo); see at least column 6, lines 30-33 of Angiulo. Thus, if for the sake of argument the selection controls of Angiulo are equated with the tasks of the claims, then according to Angiulo neither the dropdown menus nor the items therein are visibly displayed regardless of the task being performed, in contrast to the present claimed invention.

Also, according to Angiulo, the dropdown menu and the items therein can only be active (e.g., visibly displayed) if its associated selection control is active. In essence, according to Angiulo, the dropdown menus and the items therein are not visibly displayed whether or not they are active, in contrast to the present claimed invention.

Applicants also respectfully submit that the selection controls of Angiulo do not read on the graphic elements of Claims 1, 9, 17 and 25. According to Angiulo, activating or selecting one selection control does not activate or deactivate another selection control. According to Angiulo, it is the selection of an item in a dropdown menu that may cause a selection control to activate or deactivate, and as presented above, the dropdown menus and the items therein do not read on the graphics elements of Claims 1, 9, 17 and 25.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Angiulo does not show or suggest the present invention as recited in independent Claims 1,

9, 17 and 25. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1, 9, 17 and 25 traverse the basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and are in condition for allowance. As such, Applicants also respectfully submit that Claims 4-5, 7-8, 12-13, 15-16, 20-21, 23-24 and 27-30 traverse the basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), as these claims are dependent on allowable base claims and recite additional limitations.

103 Rejections

The instant Office Action states that Claims 2-3, 10-11, 18-19 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Angiulo in view of IBM Technical Disclosure Bulletin vol. 38, issue no. 12, "User Tool Interface Design for Custom Chip Design" ("IBM;" TDB-ACC-No. NN9512223).

Claims 2-3, 10-11, 18-19 and 26 are dependent on independent Claims 1, 9, 17 and 25 and recite additional limitations. Thus, by demonstrating that the combination of Angiulo and IBM does not show or suggest the limitations of Claims 1, 9, 17 and 25, it is also demonstrated that the combination of Angiulo and IBM does not show or suggest the limitations of Claims 2-3, 10-11, 18-19 and 26.

As presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that Angiulo does not show or suggest the present invention as recited in independent Claims 1, 9, 17 and 25. Applicants also respectfully submit that IBM does not overcome the shortcomings of Angiulo.

Specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that IBM, alone or in combination with Angiulo, does not show or suggest that certain graphic elements are activated and others deactivated in response to a user selecting an active element, where the elements are visibly displayed regardless of the task being performed and regardless of whether the elements are active or not, as recited in independent Claims 1, 9, 17 and 25.

In summary, Applicants respectfully submit that Angiulo and IBM, alone or in combination, do not show or suggest the present claimed invention as recited in independent Claims 1, 9, 17 and 25. As such, Applicants also respectfully submit that Claims 2-3, 10-11, 18-19 and 26 traverse the basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as these claims are dependent on allowable base claims and recite additional limitations.

Conclusions

In light of the above remarks, reconsideration of the rejected claims is respectfully requested.

Based on the arguments presented above, it is respectfully asserted that Claims 1-5, 7-13, 15-21 and 23-30 overcome the rejections of record and, therefore, allowance of these claims is solicited.

The references cited but not relied upon have been reviewed. These references were not found to show or suggest the present claimed invention: U.S. Patent Nos. 5,867,163; 6,717,597; 5,737,557; and 5,442,746.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,

WAGNER, MURABITO & HAO LLP

Date: 9/2/04

William A. Zarbis
Reg. No. 46,120

Two North Market Street
Third Floor
San Jose, California 95113
(408) 938-9060